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Libyan Bedouin MT9

[For information on the establishment of schools and medical clinics in Libya by the Italian government for the benefit of the Bedouins, see Categories 175 and 648.]

634 which result in permanent bodily harm. Reporting such cases is a fairly
554 minor proceeding since such cases come to the knowledge of the authori-
657 ties through other channels, mainly from talks involved in the mediation
674 for the bloodmoney or from the hospital to which serious assault cases
[743] are usually taken. Besides, reporting a crime does not mean convicting
the offender. This latter depends on evidence which, in case the dis-
pute has been settled by tribal proceedings, is hard for the police au-
thorities to find.

634 While the government demands do not impose serious conflicts of
554 loyalty on the part of the omda, if successful, his position with the
657 government can bring to his tribal segments great benefits. These bene-
fits are usually in the form of various social and economic aids in-
cluding fodder for the animals and food and clothing for the people
during the dry years. Other benefits including providing the tribal
population with olive trees and helping them clear many of the old Roman
wells and establishing wind mills for nominal fees. Not everyone in the
area can have such benefits. Some do not even know they exist. A success-
ful omda could manipulate the administration to get as many benefits for
[871] his tribal segment as possible.. Some successful omdas were able to have
[474] the government build schools in their districts, establish cooperative
units to market local products such as wool, sheep, and olive oil.

634 This should not lead us, however, to conclude that the position of
554 the omda in the Western Desert does not involve any kind of conflicting
657 loyalty or that he is always supported by his people or even trusted by
578 them. One informant said that the omda of his biat is "...government
man, not ours....He would sell us all if this pleases his masters in the